DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 058 252 TM 000 962

AUTHOR Ellis, E. N.; Rintoul, R. M.
TITLE An Evaluation of an Individualized Reading Program, Grade 7, Sir Richard McBride Elementary School for the 1970-71 School Year.
INSTITUTION Vancouver Board of School Trustees (British Columbia).
REPORT NO RR-71-22
PUB DATE Aug 71
NOTE 8p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Attitude Tests; Classroom Libraries; *Grade 7; *Individualized Reading; Junior High School Students; Paperback Books; *Program Evaluation; Reading Ability; Reading Comprehension; Remedial Reading Programs; *Student Attitudes; *Teacher Attitudes

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this individualized reading program were to generate greater interest and enthusiasm in reading, to provide specific help to individuals who were weak in reading, and to improve reading skills. Innovations included special materials in all classes and the establishment of a remedial reading class. Although scores on an attitude inventory failed to indicate improvement, teachers agreed that the program had generated a greater interest in reading. Pupil and teacher reactions to the program are appended. (MS)

ED 058252

RESEARCH REPORT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

An Evaluation of an Individualized Reading Program, Grade 7, Sir Richard McBride Elementary School for the 1970-71 School Year

August, 1971
E.N. Ellis and R.M. Rintoul
Research Report 71-22

Department of Planning and Evaluation
Board of School Trustees
1595 West 10th Avenue
Vancouver 9, B. C.

TM 000 962

AN EVALUATION OF

AN INDIVIDUALIZED READING PROGRAM

GRADE 7 SIR RICHARD McBRIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FOR THE 1970-71 SCHOOL YEAR

August, 1971

E. N. Ellis and R. M. Rintoul

Research Report 71-22

Department of Planning and Evaluation
Board of School Trustees
1595 West 10th Avenue
Vancouver 9, B.C.

AN EVALUATION OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED READING PROGRAM

GRADE 7 SIR RICHARD McBRIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FOR THE 1970-71 SCHOOL YEAR

TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
Statement of the Problem		1
Purposes of the Program		1
Description of the Program		1
Evaluation of the Program		1
1. Attitude to Reading		1
2. Number of Books Read		2
3. Reading Ability		2
4. Pupil Reaction		3
5. Teacher Reaction		3
Summary and Conclusions		3
Appendix A	Pupils' Reactions to the Classroom Library of Paperback Novels	4
Appendix B	Teachers' Reactions to the Program	5

AN EVALUATION OF AN INDIVIDUALIZED READING PROGRAM

GRADE 7 SIR RICHARD McBRIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

FOR THE 1970-71 SCHOOL YEAR

Statement of the Problem

Early in the Fall term; the Principal and teachers at Sir Richard McBride Elementary School recognized that many of the pupils in Grade 7 were handicapped by their lack of interest and limited ability in reading. On the Gates-MacGinitie reading test given in September to all pupils (N = 110) in Grade 7 there were many scores at a level between Grades 3 and 6.

The teachers were particularly concerned with:

- the inability of pupils to attack a word phonetically,
- their limited comprehension of printed material, and
- their poor attitude towards books.

Purposes of the Program

The purposes of the program were:

- to generate interest in reading and enthusiasm for good books,
- to provide specific help to individuals who were weak in reading, and
- to improve reading skills generally.

Description of the Program

The essential features of the program were the following.

- The reading abilities of each pupil were analyzed. (The scores on the Gates-MacGinitie test provided a profile of strengths and weaknesses in reading.)
- Those pupils who were weak in reading attended the remedial reading class.
- Pupils in each division (or class) were grouped for language arts instruction according to their reading ability.
- The curriculum for two divisions included stories and poems from "Sense and Feeling," the novels "Big Red" and "A Christmas Carol," exercises from "An Introduction to Better Reading" and other exercises in silent reading and phonics. The third division used "Lessons for Self-Instruction in Basic Skills," "The MacMillan Spectrum," S.R.A. "Rate Builders," "Advanced Skills in Reading", "Word Attack", and Fry's "Reading Faster Drill Book". Late in the term, the "Literature Sampler," (Book Society of Canada) was put into use.
- The teacher of Remedial Reading used programmed learning materials, a phonics program and speed reading.
- The Coordinator for the Intermediate Grades provided many useful ideas.
- Special instructional materials, including an SRA Reading Laboratory, were provided.
- The Vancouver School Board, through its budget for Experimental Projects, supplied a collection of 176 attractive paperback novels that were high in interest level and low in difficulty level. An independent reading program was initiated, with most of the reading done at home. Each student kept a book list.
- The pupils discussed books that they had read.
- Each pupil wrote a formal book report.
- The program was evaluated systematically.

Evaluation of the Program

1. Attitude to Reading

The San Diego County Inventory of Reading Attitude was given in November, 1970 and again in June, 1971. The results are summarized in Table I.

TABLE I: MEAN SCORES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CHANGES BETWEEN PRE-AND POST-TESTS, SAN DIEGO COUNTY INVENTORY OF READING, GRADE 7, MCBRIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

	Division 1 (N = 35)	Division 2 (N = 30)	Division 3 (N = 29)	Total (N = 94)
Pre-Test (Nov., 1970)	15.8	13.7	14.7	14.8
Post-Test (June, 1971)	16.3	13.1	13.1	14.3
Change	+ 0.5	- 0.6	- 1.6	- 0.5
"t" value	0.99	1.01	2.52	1.44
Significance level	(n.s.d.)	(n.s.d.)	(sig. at .05)	(n.s.d.)

Legend: n.s.d. - no significant difference

sig. at .05 - significant at the .05 level

The results displayed in Table I fail to indicate any improvement in pupils' attitudes toward reading as measured by the San Diego Inventory at these times. However, the teachers reported:

"There has been a definite change in attitude in the majority of the students towards books."

"Students who have always read are reading faster and they are attempting to balance their reading by trying classics, myths, fables, biographies and plays."

"I feel there was a change in attitude towards reading in the majority of students. Three of the thirty-six said there was no change. Two of those three already had a positive attitude and read a great deal. There was no change in the attitude of one pupil."

"The children generally exhibited a positive attitude toward this program."

2. Number of Books Read

The teachers of Division 1 reported the number of books read ranged from 10 to 92. The median number was 37. Most books were read between November and April.

In another division, the average number of books read was nine, and the range extended from none to nineteen. (It should be noted that for this class, the time for free reading was limited because the class was in its own classroom for only 25% of the time and more than half of this time was assigned for science and guidance.)

The teacher of the third class questioned the pupils about the number of books read in comparison to previous reading:

15 pupils responded "about the same,"

12 pupils claimed to be reading more books, and

4 pupils acknowledged that they were reading fewer books.

3. Reading Ability

The Gates-MacGinitie Reading Test (Level E) was administered in October and in March to the pupils of Division 1. The grade-equivalent scores on the Comprehension and Vocabulary subtests ranged from 4.0 to 11.3. Improvements in these scores varied from + 0.5 to + 3.0.

The same tests were given to the pupils of Division 2 but the results were reported in terms of mean standard scores as follows:

Subtest	September 1970	March 1971	Gain
Speed	43	54	+11
Accuracy	43	54	+11
Vocabulary	47	51	+ 4
Comprehension	50	50	0

For Division 3, the results were expressed in mean grade equivalent scores, viz.

Subtest	September 1970	February 1971	Gain
Vocabulary	6.3	7.7	+1.4
Comprehension	6.5	7.0	+0.5

4. Pupil Reaction (See Appendix A)

The pupils of Division 1 were asked to comment on the paperback library at the back of the room. There were 31 positive reactions and four that were negative. (See Appendix A) There were numerous favourable comments about the good selection of paperbacks that appealed to them. The convenience of having books immediately available in the classroom was generally appreciated.

5. Teacher Reaction (See Appendix B)

Teachers made favourable evaluations of the program. They felt that for a majority of pupils the program had accomplished its purpose. Two teachers noted the improvement in the attitudes of pupils towards books and the increase in their reading. Two teachers reported that communication among teachers had improved and that the exchange of ideas was valuable. All of the teachers had constructive suggestions for the improvement of the program.

Summary and Conclusions

This report has attempted to compile data and subjective assessments that may help to evaluate an individualized reading program for pupils in Grade 7, Sir Richard McBride Elementary School, for the 1970-71 school year. The purposes of the program were to generate greater interest in reading, to cause some pupils to discover the enjoyment that is to be derived from a good book, to provide specific help to those pupils whose reading skills are deficient, and to improve the reading abilities of all pupils.

Early in the term reading tests were given to generate individual profiles of strengths and weaknesses in reading abilities. Pupils who were weak in reading attended the remedial reading class. The classes were provided with special instructional materials and a collection of attractive paperback novels that would appeal to the pupils.

While scores on an attitude inventory failed to yield any indications of improvement, the teachers agreed that the program had generated greater interest in reading. Some pupils were doing considerably more reading as a result of the program. The reading abilities of pupils were generally increased. Pupils reacted positively to the classroom library of paperback novels and the teachers made favourable evaluations of the program.

APPENDIX A

PUPILS' REACTIONS TO THE CLASSROOM LIBRARY OF PAPERBACK NOVELS

Pupils of Division 1 were asked to comment about the library of paperbacks at the back of the classroom. Of 35 responses, only four were negative, saying:

> "I don't think they've helped my attitude about reading. They looked good but I just don't go for reading, I guess. I'm just glad they've got them and they've probably helped lots of people but they haven't helped me."
>
> "The books didn't help me at all. They didn't encourage me to read either. The main effect was it was something for me to do in my spare time."
>
> "It gave us a chance to select a book. We chose them and bought them, but we probably could have done just as well without them if we'd have looked in our school library."
>
> "For me, it didn't change anything because there were only a couple of books I liked back at the rack. Most of mine came from the school library."

The rest were positive, commenting on:

> Availability and convenience - They didn't have to leave the room and go to the library to get a book. They were able to choose a book <u>anytime</u>.
> (12 people commented on this)
>
> The books were new, selection good, and more for the age of the group.
> (15 people commented on this)
>
> Paperbacks were helpful. They encouraged me to read.
> (11 people commented on this)
>
> Helped me to read faster and improve my reading skills.
> (3 people commented on this)
>
> Liked reading better now than I did before.
> (10 people included this in comment)
>
> Books are smaller and lighter. Liked paperbacks better than hardbacks.
> (2 people included this in comment)
>
> Helped my writing.
> (1 person included this in comment)
>
> Since we've bought those books, I've gone on a "reading splurge."
> (1 person commented on this)

Pupils in another class gave these reactions:

> "Books were interesting.
> Books were easy to read.
> Some were of different types from those in Library (regular).
> Children liked the availability of books in the classroom.
> The small print and absence of pictures were not deterrents.
> Easily handled - liked small size.
> A few children stated they lacked time for reading because of sports and homework."

They would suggest adding:

> More space stories.
> More sports stories - baseball, hockey, etc., and fishing.
> More animal stories - horse, dog, wildlife.
> More boy-girl stories - dating.

APPENDIX B

TEACHERS' REACTIONS TO THE PROGRAM

First Teacher

"Books were always on the move and the conferences revealed that there was a great deal of enjoyment associated with most of the books read. I noticed that there was a great deal of interchange and comment on the books among students. This was not always staged by me. Any spare time in English class, in which they could choose how to use their time, reading took place.

For next year, in order to reach the objective of encouraging students to read for pleasure, I would make the following suggestions:

a. I would continue to provide class time just for the students to read.

b. As for improving certain reading skills, with the aid of a reading test such as the Gates-MacGinitie, certain areas of weakness could be recognized and improved upon by grouping the students.

c. The students' persuasion for other students to read a certain book is a very good impetus for some to read.

d. If there were money available, the students would go on the buying trip. They would also be encouraged to bring books from home to be on loan to the others.

In conclusion, the selection of the books made by the students, and their availability at the back of the room, the time to read during class, and encouragement from students and teacher, affected and changed some attitudes towards reading and books. It might also be mentioned that this project has resulted in increased communication between the Grade VII teachers and these resources have been very stimulating."

Second Teacher

"I believe the purchase of paperbacks was beneficial. The children generally exhibited a positive attitude toward this program.

They had time to browse and reject any book and were encouraged to investigate other types of stories. Class time reading of the novels was seldom allowed because reading skills were quite deficient. Some children were somewhat dubious of the program in case it involved too many book reports or other written assignments (only single comments were required). Consequently, children may have considered the reading program as school work rather than their pleasure.

Next term, it is planned to allow pupils at least one free reading period per week (with novels stressed), regardless of academic standing in reading.

This program has increased teacher communication and the exchange of ideas has been most valuable."

Third Teacher

"1. All books were available to the students on a free choice basis. Time for free reading in this class was limited because the division was in its classroom only 11 periods of 42. Of these 11 periods only 5 were for reading. This was a definite limitation to the project.

2. Despite the above statement, a significant proportion of my books that were read did come from the pocketbook library (at least 25%).

3. A number of the students were not attracted by any of the available pocket books. As a starter, perhaps non-book reading material should be purchased—magazines, for example."